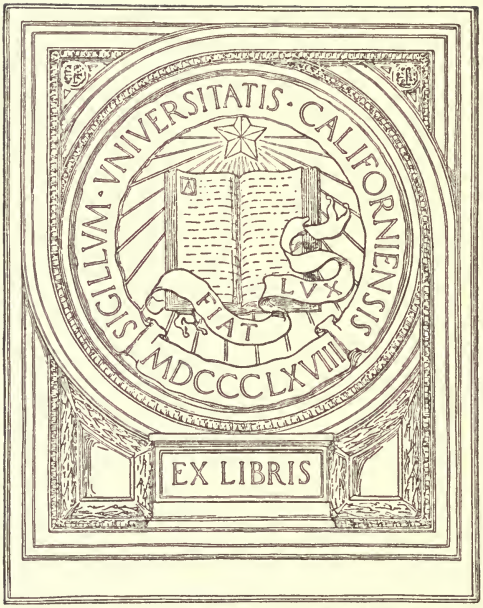
F
165
M3
Case B


SIGILLVM · VNIVERSITATIS · CALIFORNIENSIS
LVX
FIAT
MDCCCLXVIII
EX LIBRIS

CAS
B

NARRATIVE OF RICHARD LEE MASON IN THE PIONEER WEST, 1819

Heartman's Historical Series No. 6

DR. RICHARD LEE MASON

NARRATIVE

OF

RICHARD LEE MASON

IN THE PIONEER WEST

1819

One hundred and sixty copies printed for
CHAS. FRED. HEARTMAN, New York City

CASE
B

TO

G. J. BARBER, Esq.

this book is dedicated

by

Chas. Fred. Heartman

Number.....of 150 copies printed on Fabriano hand-made paper.

Also ten copies printed on Japan Vellum.

In the late fall and early winter of the year 1819 Dr. Richard Lee Mason made a journey from Philadelphia to Illinois, through Pennsylvania, Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana. Some of his adventures were remarkable, and these, together with his observations on the country, the towns and the people whom he encountered, were recorded in a diary kept by him, which is now in the possession of his only surviving child, a daughter, who resides in Jacksonville, Ill. Dr. Mason was a remarkably intelligent observer, and his record of the people whom he encountered in Illinois more than three-quarters of a century ago, not to mention his notes of travel in other states, is unique and valuable.

Richard Lee Mason, whose diary is being published in THE RECORD, was born in Port Tobacco, Md. In 1806 he was married to Mary Hodge Cochrane. Seven children were born to them, of whom five lived to maturity. Soon after his marriage he was graduated from the medical department of the University of Pennsylvania. For a time he did military service in the war of 1812, belonging to a cavalry company called "The White Horsemen." For this service he was awarded a large tract of bounty land near Alton, Ill. It was to locate and take possession of this land that the long journey from Philadelphia to St. Louis was taken.

So pleased was Dr. Mason with his "promised land" and the west country, that he determined to send for his family and follow his profession in St. Louis. This he did, and he was held in high esteem, but he did not live long to enjoy the reunion with his family, and the appreciation of friends. The hardships of his trip and exposure to malarial atmosphere had impaired his health, and he died in 1824, having submitted gracefully to the heroic treatment of the day, which admitted of much bleeding and blistering.

Dr. Mason was buried in a newly purchased masonic cemetery, some distance beyond the St. Louis city limits, in ground that is now Washington avenue, between Tenth and Eleventh streets. Subsequently this ground was found too wet for the purpose designed, and Dr. Mason's body was removed. It is of interest to know that he was the first mason interred with the honors of the order in the state of Missouri. His funeral was made the occasion of a grand procession, escorted by Capt. Archibald Gamble's troop of cavalry.

This record was published some twenty years ago in a newspaper from which this reprint is made Decoration Day, 1915.

H.

I.—Philadelphia to Steubenville

Monday, Oct. 4, 1819.—Dr. Hall and myself left Philadelphia at 1 o'clock p. m. after taking an affectionate leave of friends and acquaintances. Fair and pleasant weather, and the roads very fine in consequence of a refreshing shower of rain which fell on the night previous to our setting out. After traveling twenty-two miles and passing some rich and well-cultivated farms we arrived at West Chester at 7 o'clock. West Chester contains about 600 inhabitants, several places of worship, a gaol, etc., etc. A man named Downey is confined in the gaol of this place for debt. He was once in affluence, but from misfortunes and some imprudence he became reduced in circumstances. During his confinement he determined to starve himself to death, and for seven days had refused nourishment of every description. Even the clergy waited on him and endeavored to dissuade him from his rash determination, offering him food of different kinds, but all without avail. He was able to stand. No doubt one or two more days will end his troubles. How long, O my country, will your cheeks con-

tinue to be crimsoned by the blush that must follow the plunging an innocent and unfortunate being, a debtor, in a dungeon, amongst murderers and cut-throats?

Tuesday, Oct. 5.—Left West Chester at 7 o'clock a. m. Traveled a rough road. Passed some travelers on foot migrating to the west who were able to keep pace with us for a considerable distance. Breakfasted with an old Dutchman who, for unpolished manners and even a want of common politeness, surpassed in expectation even the wild men of Illinois. He had been a tavern-keeper for forty years. Roads rough. Lands tolerable, but so well farmed that the traveler is compelled in many places to admire them. Arrived in Strasburg at 6 o'clock p. m. Neat little village. Distance twenty-eight miles. Lodged at a private house near the village. Was treated with great civility. I was extremely sore and tired, riding on horseback. Saddlebags very heavy. A refreshing sleep fitted me for the labors of the next day.

Wednesday, Oct. 6.—Left Mr. —— at 6 o'clock a. m. The day pleasant. Roads rough. Traveled nine miles and arrived at Lancaster, a large and handsome inland town. Inhabitants principally German, very industrious and good farmers.

Buildings chiefly brick. Considerable business done in this town. Left Lancaster, traveled ten miles and arrived at Columbia, situated on the bold Susquehanna, but placed without much taste or beauty. The bridge over the Susquehanna is the longest in the United States. It is placed on regular pillars for one and a quarter miles. Its beauty and strength reflect much credit on the designer and those who executed the work. Its erection has added much to the comfort and convenience of the public. Left Columbia 4 o'clock, and arrived at Little York at 6 o'clock p. m. Here the lands are rich, the inhabitants look healthy and appear happy and independent. The village is built with much taste and judgment and appears to be a place of business. No lands for sale for many years past in the neighborhood, but the supposed value about $200 per acre. The eyes of the traveler light on this part of the country with rapture. He would even venture to barter all his fair prospects in the west country, collected from travelers, for one of those beautiful farms to be seen every mile.

Thursday, Oct. 7.—Left Little York 6 o'clock a. m., traveled twenty-nine miles and arrived at Gettysburg, a small village, at 5 o'clock p. m. The inhabitants very religious. Bad roads, owing to their making a new turnpike. Nineteen miles to

be finished in six weeks. About 300 hands employed, principally Irishmen. Delightful weather for traveling.

Friday, Oct. 8.—Left Gettysburg 5 o'clock a. m. Overtook and passed many travelers bound to the east and west. The lands only tolerable. Here we had the first view of the mountains, which present a romantic and novel scene to all who have never traveled out of the confines of large cities—or have never seen an object higher than a lamp-post or lower than a gutter. Traveled fifteen miles to breakfast on the top of the mountain. The landlord drunk, the fare bad and the house filled with company who had more the appearance of penitentiary society than gentlemen. Hard scuffle for breakfast. Ran an old hen down. "Moll" cut off the head with an ax. An old sow and a starved dog made a grab before the feathers were stripped. One got the head, the other the body. Then all hands were mustered to join in the chase, landlord and "Moll" with the broom, the hostler with his spade and all the boys with sticks and stones. In about ten minutes after hard fighting, the materials for breakfast were recovered, and in fifteen minutes the old hen made her appearance on the breakfast table, large as life. Bad appetite. Made a light breakfast and set out on our journey from the tavern at 10

o'clock a. m. Traveled over a rough, barren, mountainous and poor country to McDowell's, a distance of thirty-six miles. Every traveler must be astonished to find persons settled on a barren and mountainous country, whilst there are in the United States so many million acres of land of the first quality unoccupied and for sale at so low a rate that a day laborer can in one year with prudence lay up enough to purchase one quarter-section—160 acres.

Saturday, Oct. 9.—Left McDowell's 7 o'clock a. m. Traveled over an extremely rugged, high and uneven range of mountains. The lands generally so poor not worth cultivating. Arrived at Dennis', on the old road, distance twenty-seven miles, near the Juniata. Breakfasted at Camel Town, a small village, one-half the houses taverns. Crossed the dreary and lofty mountains at 4 o'clock. This is called Sideling hill, where a Mr. McClennan was robbed on the 3d instant by the notorious villain and robber, D. Lewis, lately pardoned by Gov. Finley for forgery. McClennan had no arms, nor did he make the least resistance, yet one of Lewis' accomplices insisted on murdering him. He was robbed about 9 o'clock in the morning, and in sight of the house he breakfasted at. He was conducted to their camp, a little way from the road, threatened with death if he spoke.

Although the stage passed full of passengers and several wagons in sight, he dared not give the alarm. After keeping him in a state of suspense for six hours and rifling his letters and pockets of a large sum of money, they left him. On the 8th instant they were taken at a little village fifty miles off, and a large amount of cash found on them—$2,800. The hardihood of this Lewis surpasses the boldness of most robbers of his day. When he and his two companions were found asleep they were handcuffed. One of the guards laid his pistol on the table, whilst Lewis was surrounded by twenty persons, and in a room. He knocked out the candle, seized the pistol, flashed at the nearest person, made his way through the crowd, outran them for fifty yards, and, when about to be overtaken, snapped a small pistol which he had concealed at his nearest pursuer. He knocked down the second with his handcuffs, then fell and was retaken. The poverty, barrenness, unevenness of this part of the country perhaps was never surpassed. But few homes on the road. Met a number of travelers and overtook some. About 4 o'clock it commenced raining. Unpleasant traveling. Wet to the skin. Arrived at the crossing at dark on the old road two miles from the turnpike. Tavern kept by Dennis. Bad house; high charges. Rainy night.

Sunday, Oct. 10.—Left Dennis' 6 o'clock a. m. Breakfasted at a little village called Bloody Run. Great many travelers. Poor country. Reached Bedford at 2 o'clock. Whilst our horses were resting we walked to the celebrated springs, a distance of one and a half miles.

These springs are romantically situated, gushing from the foot of a mountain. They are fitted up with great taste and beauty and offer to the wearied citizen a treat of retirement and enjoyment. Two of the houses are painted white. They are two stories high and 150 feet long. These springs are said to possess important medicinal properties. Arrived at Shellsburg at 6 o'clock, a distance of twenty-three miles. The road stony and unpleasant. Well entertained and the charge moderate.

Monday, Oct. 11.—Left Shellsburg at 6 o'clock. Poor country, full of mountains. Crossed the lofty Allegheny. High ridges, deep valleys and steep precipices. Roads good for such steep mountains. Here one of the most sublime and beautiful scenes presented itself my eyes ever witnessed. After ascending the Allegheny nearly to the top, as far as human sight could reach, in every direction, there were chains of mountains, occasionally checkered by small farms and low bottoms, covered wth forest trees. The cleared or culti-

vated land has lost the agreeable green, owing to the season, but we were amply compensated by the variety of color, the beautiful tints from the scarlet to the lighter shades, occasionally interspersed with evergreens, which were to be found on the sides of the mountains amongst the great variety of trees. Yellow, blue, green, orange, purple, black and all the shades between formed ornamental curtains to those cloudlike heights. Poets and painters would have envied us the sight. We continued our journey to the top of the mountains. Breakfasted at Stolter's. Arrived at Wray's log house at 6 o'clock, a distance of twenty-eight miles. Fare bad, charges high, pretty females with glowing faces. After resting and having supped, recollected that it was this day week that we left home. Drew a long sigh for those left behind and almost involuntarily turned our heads to look for Philadelphia.

Tuesday, Oct. 12.—Left Wray's log house at 6 o'clock a. m. Country poor and mountainous. Traveled thirty-five miles. Overtook some eastern and southern people, men, women and children, all travelling to Illinois. The roads a little improved, and the land a little better in quality. The towering mountains disappearing and hills substituted in their place. This being election

day, passed a great many people on the road. All merry. Great contention between the Dutch and Irish. Arrived at a small village called . . . where the election was held. Saw a shocking fight, which ended in murder. A small man knocked down by his adversary and his intestines literally stamped out. I pressed through the crowd, and insisted on bleeding the unfortunate young man. Just as I was about to open a vein his senses returned. He begged I would not bleed him, as he had never been bled. I declined the operation. He died on the 14th instant. Left the election and arrived at a trifling village called Adams Town, where we overtook a number of travelers for the west. Left Adams Town 6 o'clock a. m., and arrived at Pittsburg at 11 o'clock, Hunters' tavern. In approaching this dirty hole I felt the height of disappointment. Pittsburg is situated in a valley surrounded by hills and mountains. It is placed a short distance above the junction of the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers, to form the Ohio, over which there are two neat and lengthy bridges, built on Wernwag's plan. In approaching Pittsburg the traveler would suppose the town was laid in ashes by fire. The surrounding heights, its low situation, the fogs from the rivers, together with the universal use of stone coal for fires, added to the smoke and dust from the large number of mills

and manufactories, form a cloud which almost amounts to night, and overspreads Pittsburg with the appearance of gloom and melancholy. At this place we met a number of travelers, rich and poor, Gen. Miller and suite, straggling play actors, and others. Coal dust was well ground in until I might say with much truth that I did not see a white man or woman in the place. The more you wash, the blacker you get. I am confident that I carried some of this coal dust 1,000 miles in spite of my efforts to get rid of it. Convenient place for performing "Zanga" or "The Moor of Venice." Visited all the manufactories and curiosities of the place. Their glass manufactories seem to excel all others—a great treat to those who never saw a bottle blown. Pittsburg in appearance suggests the idea of Moscow smoking and in ruins. It is a town of considerable manufacturing importance. Its inhabitants deserve fortune and a more salubrious atmosphere to spend it in.

Thursday, Oct. 14.—Remained this day at Hunters'. Had my good little horse shod. Careless smith pricked him and produced temporary lameness.

Friday, Oct. 15.—Left Pittsburg at 7 o'clock. Traveled over a poor and hilly country for thirty-

six miles. Passed a few travelers bound to Ohio. Remarkable fact: About eight miles from Steubenville passed out of Pennsylvania into Virginia, out of Virginia into Ohio in the short space of two hours. Crossed the Ohio river after night at Steubenville. Stopped at Jenkinson's, an intelligent, gentlemanly, hospitable man. Visited the market. Beef, good, 6¼ cents a pound.

Saturday, Oct. 16.—I omitted to mention that we, on the mountains, fell in with Mr. Cooper of Philadelphia, who has been our companion for several days. We had to part with him today, which we did with much reluctance, as he proved a very agreeable companion. Rainy day, fatigued by the broken country, determined to spend this day in Steubenville, a busy little village on the bank of the Ohio. Purchased a plain Jersey wagon and harness for $60.

II.—Through Ohio and Kentucky

Sunday, Oct. 18.—Myself and friend proceeded on our journey. We arrived at Siers, a distance of thirty miles, at dusk, much relieved by the change from our horses to the wagon. The roads were muddy, the weather drizzly and the country hilly. Buildings indifferent. The land very fer-

tile and black. Trees uncommonly tall. Passed the little village of Cadis. In this country a tavern, a store, a smith shop and two or three cabins make a town. Passed ten or fifteen travelers. Great contrast between the quality of the land from Chambersburg to Pittsburg, and that which we have already traveled over from Steubenville in Ohio.

Monday, Oct. 19.—Left Siers at 6 o'clock a. m. The morning fair and cold. Roads extremely rough. Country fertile, but hilly. Log cabins, ugly women and tall timber. Passed a little flourishing village called Freeport, settled by foreigners. Yankee Quakers and mechanics. Remarkable, with two taverns in the village, there was nothing fit to drink, not even good water. The corn fields in the woods among dead trees and the corn very fine. We arrived at Adairs, a distance of twenty-seven miles, at 6 o'clock p. m. Passed some peddlers and a few travelers. Value of land from Steubenville to Adairs from $2 to $30 per acre. Lots in Freeport, eighteen months old, from $30 to $100. This day being Monday and the end of the second week since leaving home, our feelings were warm and our hearts beat high for those that are dear and behind us.

Tuesday, Oct. 20.—Left Adairs at 6 o'clock a. m. The country extremely hilly and not quite so fertile. Independent people in log cabins. They make their own clothes, sugar and salt, and paint their own signs. They picture a lion like a dove, a cat like a terrapin, and Gen. Washington like a bird's nest. Salt wells and sugar orchards are common in this country. Steep hills, frightful precipices, little or no water, and even a scarcity of new whisky. Ragged and ignorant children and but little appearance of industry. Met a number of travelers inclining to the east, and overtook a larger number than usual bound to the land of promise. The evening being rainy, the roads soon became muddy. We arrived at Silver's Travelers' Rest at 6 o'clock. Distance twenty-nine miles. Passed a little village called Cambridge.

Wednesday, Oct. 21—Left Silver's at 7 o'clock and breakfasted at Zanesville, a very growing and flourishing village. It is situated on the Muskingum river, which is navigable for flat-bottomed boats. Zanesville is a lively and busy little town. There are several mills and manufactories in and at the place. Neat bridges and a canal cut at great labor and expense through a solid rock for a considerable distance, by which very important water power is gained. Left

Zanesville and traveled twenty-three miles to a village called Somerset. The country very hilly and the lands not so fertile as those met with near Cadis. Rain continues. Roads extremely slippery. Met and overtook about sixty travelers, many on foot—Scotch, Irish, and Yankees. Oats, 25 cents; butter, 12½ cents; brandy, 50 cents a half-pint; hay, $8 a ton.

Thursday, Oct. 22.—Left Somerset at 7 o'clock a. m. Dull, drizzly weather. Deep roads. Horse lame in consequence of bad shoeing in Pittsburg. Heart a little heavy. Thought of home. Rallied again and arrived at a neat little town at the foot of a hill. It is called New Lancaster. Distance, eighteen miles. Stopped on the road for refreshment and found a Pennsylvania family whose kindness and hospitality deserve mention, as we had been denied water and sometimes other refreshments by the almost wild inhabitants west of Pittsburg to this place. Some brick houses and a few neat frame dwellings to be seen in the last two days' ride.

Friday, Oct. 23—Left New Lancaster at 8 o'clock and arrived at Chillicothe, a distance of thirty-four miles. Passed some elegant farms and some neat dwellings. The people appear more polite and better educated. Chillicothe is

situated on the Sciota, a stream navigable for flat-bottomed boats. The bridge over the Sciota is long, substantial and handsome. Chillicothe is a town of considerable business for its size. One of the branches of the United States bank is at this place. The bank was entered lately by a man named Harper, acting under the authority of the state, and a large amount of money was taken out. Harper and his attendants in gaol. Mob threatens to release them. Bank of the United States and all its branches are much abused by the inhabitants and some very impudent threats made. When the bank was entered by Harper no resistance was made by its officers. Passed Tarlton and Kingston, two inconsiderable villages.

Saturday, Oct. 24—Left Chillicothe at 7 o'clock a. m. Arrived at Sinking Springs, a little village, after traveling a distance of thirty-three miles. Passed over some rich bottoms, neat farms and very fertile prairies. A few poor ridges, part level, part mountainous. People look healthy, but are extremely impudent and lazy. Game is abundant deer, turkeys, partridges and squirrels.

Sunday, Oct. 25.—Left Sinking Springs at 7 o'clock a. m. Traveled to West Union, a little village. Distance twenty-three miles. Lands of three qualities, broken, barren and mountainous.

Miserable log huts. Inhabitants more polite and civil. Crossed Brush creek at the foot of a small mountain. At this place met some travelers, among them some Philadelphians. The inhabitants in this part of the country generally emigrants. Real Ohios, real savages in appearance and manners, destitute of every degree of politeness. Not uncommon for a man to follow three or four occupations. For example, John Noble follows both tailoring and saddlering. My barber is also a waiter on the table, assistant cook and hostler. In this town one man is a lawyer, a merchant and an apothecary.

Monday, Oct. 26.—Left West Union at 10 o'clock a. m. My friend having business here, we lost one day. Traveled over a poor, hilly and mountainous country for seventeen miles and arrived at Limestone. Crossed the Ohio in a horseboat and landed at Maysville, Ky., at 5 o'clock p. m., bidding a willing adieu to Ohio, not leaving behind a single individual whom we ever wished to see again. I must confess from the many favorable representations made of the habits, manners and state of society and quality of the lands in the state of Ohio, I was prepared to meet a different soil and a different people from those just left. Before I take a final leave of Ohio I must mention an occurrence that transpired a

few days previous to our arrival in New Lancaster. Ten or fifteen friendly Indians were traveling from near New York to visit their red brethren in the west. They were poor, but peaceable and well behaved. When they were within about twenty-five miles of New Lancaster three of the Indians were unable to keep up with the leading party, a man, a young squaw and a child. Those unoffending and unfortunate people were waylaid by three monsters in human shape, ruffians belonging to the neighborhood. They lay hid until those three Indians got in a rake, and then fired upon them, intending to kill all at the same shot. The child and man escaped unhurt, but the unfortunate female had her thigh broken and received a ball in the abdomen. No hope was entertained of her recovery. The villains were taken and committed to prison. The only reason given by them for committing this extraordinary outrage was that during the war the Indians had murdered in battle some of their connections or relatives.

Tuesday, Oct. 27.—Maysville is a growing little village, situated on the Ohio and reaching in a southerly direction to the foot of a small mountain. Left Maysville at 6 o'clock a. m. and arrived four miles beyond the Blue Licks at 5 o'clock, a distance of thirty miles. Passed Wash-

ington, May Licks and some smaller villages. Some good land, some very poor. Country mountainous and stony. Great difficulty in obtaining meat or drink during the day, although taverns are plenty. The Blue Licks are rude, uncultivated, stony barrens, poor beyond description and extremely difficult to travel over. Passed several dead horses on the road. An infectious disease called the sore tongue had produced their deaths, and was to be found at every stable for hundreds of miles. Men, cows, hogs and sheep were subject to it. Being tired, hungry and disappointed in the appearance of the country, I retired to bed early. On the 25th inst. the ground was covered with snow. Little or no rain had fallen in this part of the country for near six months. Many creeks nearly dry. Great difficulty in obtaining water to drink. Passed some salt springs and wells. Salt $2.50 per bushel, coffee 50 cents per pound. Those prices will sound very high to the merchants of Philadelphia.

Wednesday, Oct. 28.—Left Artis' tavern, thirty miles from Maysville, at 7 o'clock a. m. Traveled over a very fertile country, a distance of seventeen miles, and arrived at a neat little town called Paris. Passed some handsome houses. Saw many negroes. They were ragged, foolish, and, in appearance, miserable. Paris, as a town, has

some claim to beauty. It is placed on an eminence. Many of the houses are brick and of handsome shape. There is constantly that stir and bustle which denotes a place of business. The country around is fertile, and, although there is no navigable stream near, the eye is prevented from falling too heavily on the neighboring fields and valleys by the winding of a small stream, upon which there is a busy-looking mill.

"How often have I paused on every charm—
The sheltered cot, the cultivated farm,
The never-failing brook, the busy mill,
The decent church that topped the neighboring hill."

In this little town we met a hearty welcome. The inhabitants are polite and hospitable. The singular variety which is to be found in the human family by a traveler is difficult to be described. Indeed, every hundred miles would take a small volume. Straggling play-actors and tight-rope dancers had found their way to Paris, besides other amusements which were to be found in this sprightly little town, which had a tendency to make our time pass very agreeably. On Wednesday night at 11 o'clock, I was called to visit Miss Craughan, sister of Col. Craughan, an old acquaintance. I found her dangerously ill with quinsy. Large bleedings and some other medi-

cines gave relief. Was compelled to leave her and proceed on my journey. Heard of her recovery. Interesting lady.

Thursday, Oct. 29.—Left Thorgmorton's tavern at 9 o'clock a. m. Good roads; fair weather; generous people; good land and neat dwellings. Dined in Lexington, a town of considerable size, and a place of great business. Saw large numbers of country people dealing in stores. Met and overtook but few travelers the last three or four days. Traveled this day thirty-two miles to Cole's. The lands not so fertile and a little hilly.

Friday, Oct. 30.—Left Cole's at 6 o'clock a. m. Breakfasted at Frankfort, the seat of the government of Kentucky. It is situated in a deep valley near a stream, surrounded with high and uneven hills, and at a distance, from its shape and situation, it resembles a garden laid off in squares. A very handsome bridge, neatly painted, is thrown across the Kentucky river, which, together with some public buildings erected with considerable taste, assist much in enlivening and adding beauty and elegance to the appearance of the town. Left Frankfort at 9 o'clock. Crossed the Kentucky river, which was only three feet wide, owing to the uncommon drought. Foot passengers were crossing on a rail.

Passed through Shelbyville, a small village. Many creeks, rivers and branches entirely dry. Every animal suffering for water. The farmers compelled to cart a sufficient quantity to support life, many miles. No water to be obtained in the village for our horses. Fortunately we were enabled to purchase some on the road. Traveled twenty-nine miles to Smith's. Lands rich. Country broken on the old road. Deep valleys. Frightful precipices. Beech woods. Large trees. Good corn. Warm and dry weather.

Saturday, Oct. 31.—Left Smith's at 7 o'clock a. m. Traveled over a very rich and flat country. Passed through Middletown, and at 4 o'clock arrived at Louisville, after traveling twenty-eight miles. This day being Saturday, and having met some old friends and acquaintances, a party was made up to visit the Louisville theater. Philadelphia being the theater for all great performers, curiosity was on tip-toe to view the players of Louisville. The theater is a neat little building. It was but thinly attended, owing to the pressure of the times. The play was "Wives as They Were and Maids as They Are," Mr. Drake and Mrs. Grochong supporting the principal characters. Their persons, features, voices and gestures were fine, appearing to possess the nicest feelings and tenderest sympathies, and,

in my opinion, they were well suited to a better stage. The play better performed than expected. Indeed, I may say well performed, if I may be permitted to add there was more than one of the actors who was unfeeling, unmeaning, made of wood and more like a gate-post than an animated being. This had the happiest of effects, for after shedding tears of grief at interesting parts of the play they were kept flowing with laughter at those ridiculous performers making tragedy into comedy. Louisville is a flourishing town immediately on the banks of the Ohio. The town and business principally confined to one street. The inhabitants are polite, hospitable and live fast.

Sunday, Nov. 1.—This day was spent in visiting a family near Louisville, friends of my youthful days, whom I had not seen for eighteen years. As I approached the dwelling, happy days that are never to return, pleasant hours, youthful, happy and blooming faces, joyous scenes and many dear moments, flashed suddenly across my mind. But judge of my disappointment on meeting the remains of this amiable family. I will not attempt to express feelings that in the human language know no description. Mrs. M——, a truly good woman, had been borne to that shore "from whence no traveler returns." Her daugh-

ter, who was the admiration of all that knew her, soon followed. The remains of the family which eighteen years ago was young and fashionable, elegant and beautiful, had become sedate, crooked, wrinkled and even gray. To witness the ravages of time produced a gloom which lasted several days. I took an affectionate leave of them, never expecting to see them again.

Tuesday, Nov. 3.—Remained in Louisville Monday and part of today. Left Aleen's the 2d. Passed through Shipping Port, on the bank of the Ohio, two and one-half miles below Louisville. A very promising little village. Twelve or thirteen steamboats lying at this place aground, owing to the unusual drought. Curiosity induced me to go on board the largest steamboat in the world, lying at this place. She is called the United States, and is owned by a company of gentlemen. I have taken down her dimensions: Length of keel, 165 feet 8 inches; depth of hold, 11 feet 3 inches; breadth of beam and girder, 56 feet; length on deck, 176 feet 8 inches; breadth of beam without girder, 37 feet. This mammoth boat has eight boilers and elegant accommodations for a large number of passengers. Many of the steamships lying at this place are built on improved plans and are very handsome. We crossed the Ohio at a point where it is three-

quarters of a mile wide. Passed through New Albany, Ind., a little village inhabited by tavern-keepers and mechanics. Traveled to Miller's, a distance of six miles over the knobs. Country very much broken. Some steep hills and sugar-loaf knobs. The woods being on fire, a scene truly sublime presented itself at night. The lands indifferent. Weather warm and dry. Passed many travelers bound to the west, and met three or four wagons with families returning from the promised land. Slept in a house without glass in the windows and no fastenings to the doors. The inhabitants impudent and lazy beyond example. Supped on cabbage, turnips, pickles, beets, beefsteak made of pickled beef, rye coffee and sage tea. The people of Indiana differ widely from Kentuckians in habits, manners and even dialect. Whilst hospitality, politeness and good sense characterize Kentuckians, ignorance, impudence and laziness has stamped the Indianians.

III.—A Brotherhood of Cutthroats

Wednesday, Nov. 3, 1819.—Left Miller's tavern at 7 o'clock and arrived at Squire Chambers' at 6 o'clock, after traveling a distance of thirty-six miles. Passed a trifling village, Fredericksburg; also Greenville. A poor, barren, deserted country. For ten miles, stony, poor, mountainous and

naked. Land a little better. Miserable huts, poor accommodations, cabin taverns, and high charges. Crossed Blue river. Every man his own hostler and steward. Plenty of game—deer, turkeys, etc. Inhabitants generally possess a smaller share of politeness than any met with before.

Thursday, Nov. 4.—Left Squire Chambers' (who is only member of the assembly, by the by) at 7 o'clock a. m. Arrived at Lewis' at 6 o'clock, a distance of twenty-five miles. Passed a little village called Peola. The fact that this part of Indiana is a late purchase by the United States, accounts for its towns being so inconsiderable and being made up of log houses. The lands here are very fertile, the country mountainous and broken. Traveled twenty-five miles through woods and passed but four houses. With great difficulty obtained water for our horses. In the midst of one of those long and thick pieces of woods, we passed one of the most miserable huts ever seen—a house built out of slabs without a nail; the pieces merely laid against a log pen such as pigs are commonly kept in, a dirt floor, no chimney. Indeed, the covering would be a bad one in the heat of summer, and, unfortunately, the weather at this time is very severe for the season of the year. This small cabin contained a young and interesting

female and her two shivering and almost starving children, all of whom were bare-headed and with their feet bare. There was a small bed, one blanket and a few potatoes. One cow and one pig (who appeared to share in their misfortunes) completed the family, except for the husband, who was absent in search of bread. Fortunately for the dear little children, we had in our carriage some bread, cheese, toddy, etc., which we divided with them with much heartfelt satisfaction. In this situation the woman was polite, smiled and appeared happy. She gave us water to drink, which had been refused to us by persons on the road several times during the day. What a lesson for many of the unhappy ladies that inhabit large cities, whose husbands are slaves to procure all the luxuries of life, a fine house, carpeted floors, elegant furniture, fine carriages and horses, gay and cheerful company, and a smooth brick pavement or marble to walk upon! Yet they are too often dissatisfied, and are sighing for that which cannot be obtained. Could they but contrast their situation with this ragged, suffering and delicate female, they would have just cause to be happy, and would be under the strong conviction that Providence does not interfere with the common affairs of this life. Traveled over excellent lands not taken up which could be cleared with very little labor.

Friday, Nov. 5.—Left Mr. Sears' at 7 o'clock, after having slept in a cabin with three wagons. My friend and self treated civilly by the family. The house not close enough to keep the cats and dogs out. Traveled over an extremely mountainous country to White river (east fork), where a town was laid out last May. Promising little place. Several houses building together, with the industrious appearance of saw and grist mills, give it the appearance of a place of business. Little town is called Hindoostan. In this part of the country the woods are large, the hills bold and lofty, and there is an abundance of bears, wolves, wildcats, panthers, etc. Thousands of acres of land of the first quality are unsettled and to be purchased at from $2.50 to $5 an acre. In crossing White river we had to descend a very steep precipice above the falls, in effecting which my friend, Dr. Hill, who happened to be driving our little carriage, was thrown headforemost into the river. Part of our baggage followed him, and the carriage was very near upsetting. However, we forded this elegant stream, which is 200 yards wide, without much difficulty. After halting a few minutes on the bank to examine our bruises and adjust our baggage, we proceeded on our journey. Traveled a distance of eighteen miles to the west branch of White river, which we forded without risk, the bottom

being hard and rocky. Traveled over a fertile country four miles to Steenz, making a distance of thirty-four miles. At this dirty hovel, with one room and a loft, formed by placing boards about three inches apart, ten travelers slept. There were thirteen in family, besides two calves, making in all, with my friend and self, twenty-three whites, one negro and two calves.

Saturday, Nov. 6.—Supped on pumpkins, cabbages, rye coffee without sugar, bones of venison, salted pickles, etc.—all in the midst of crying children, dirt, filth and misery. The last entertainment made the first serious unfavorable impression on my mind relative to the west. Traveled six miles to breakfast and to entertain an idea of starving. No water, no food fit to eat, dusty roads and constantly enveloped in a cloud of smoke, owing to the woods and prairies being on fire for 100 miles. Breakfasted on sound provisions for a rarity and felt a little refreshed. This part of Indiana is rich and valuable. Corn and oats 50 cents a bushel. My good little horse being sick, my usual flow of spirits commenced a retreat. However, they were soon rallied again after a few long sighs for those that are dear and far from me. Arrived at Vincennes, on the Wabash, a bold and handsome river, the size of the Schuylkill. Vincennes, an ancient town, is

small, ugly and meanly built, although beautifully situated. Its inhabitants are French, Americans, Indians—and, in short, persons from the four corners of the earth. Indian mounds or small round hills are common in this country. They are believed to be the work of art, and from bones and so forth which have been found in them are supposed to have been receptacles for the dead, when none but the footsteps of the savage was to be traced in these forests. We are now within a few miles of the Shakers and Harmonites, whom we intend to visit and give a correct account of. Very much revived this day, having lived well. Necessity is often the mother of invention. Yolk of egg, flour and water mixed is a good substitute for milk, and is often used in coffee in this country. Rye is frequently substituted for coffee and sage tea in place of the imperial.

Sunday, Nov. 7.—Left Vincennes at 7 o'clock. Crossed the meandering stream, Wabash, into Illinois. This river abounds in fish, ducks and geese. Traveled thirty-seven miles over rich and elegant prairies. Passed but very few houses in this distance. Our poor horses and ourselves almost famished for water. Traveled eighteen miles without a drop, and then compelled to use it out of a stagnant pool, where thousands of in-

sects considered the water private property. Arrived at McDermott's, on the Fox river. Obtained a list of cutthroats and murderers, whose names are as follows on the list: Gatewood, Rutherford, Grimberry, Cain, Young, Portlethwaite, etc. This chain of villains extended for eighty miles through all the dreary and lonesome prairies. We were informed that when they were not engaged in robbing or murdering they were very industriously employed in manufacturing bank notes, which they imposed on travelers at every opportunity. It may be worthy of remark that all the country for forty miles around where these banditti have taken possession belongs to the United States. For the convenience of travelers, a new road has been made through this country, instead of going by Shawneetown, and those villains have posted themselves along the road under the name of tavernkeepers, watching for their prey whenever it may pass. Indeed, I conceive it impossible for any man who has cash enough to make him worth killing to travel this road alone. Called to see Gatewood, the first man on the list of cutthroats. He was from home. Saw his wife, a handsome, young dejected-looking woman, who appeared very uneasy at her husband's being inquired for by a man almost as well armed and not much out of the style of Robinson Crusoe. Saw a bloody cravat

on the end of the log of which his house was built. We intend to call and see the balance of the fraternity out of curiosity. Traveled over prairies just burned and through woods on fire. Smoke and dust, together with the want of water, almost produced suffocation, families sending miles for water to drink. The prairies extend for miles, indeed, as far as the eye can reach, level as a plank floor. The soil generally is a bed of manure, the land uncultivated and without any person to claim it. The few inhabitants found in this part of the country are impolite, lazy and disobliging. Passed many families traveling to the west, and met a few bound to the east. There has been no rain in this part of the country for near seven months. Many of the farmers have lost stock in consequence of the drought. A few years ago this part of Illinois was inhabited only by the rude and uncivilized savage. The scalping knife and tomahawk, graced their bark dwellings and were often used in the most inhuman manner. The murdering of women and children whom they viewed as their enemies was not an uncommon occurrence. But who could have believed that when the red men of the forest had retired from this beautiful country their places would have been supplied by persons whose characters would be softened by the appellation of savage—penitentiary outcasts and murderers? Who could

believe that a human being could be so depraved as to fall upon a defenseless and unoffending traveler and murder him under the pretence of sheltering him from the storm and giving him a hearty welcome at his table? Who could believe that even devils in human shape could cut the throats of two traveling strangers to obtain two watches, $80 and a pair of saddle-bags? I shudder at the blackness of the crime. It occurred only yesterday, and we are at this moment near the spot where the horrid deed was committed. Two other murders have lately been committed near this place. A stranger was found hung on a tree and a traveler was murdered near Shawneetown by the same men whose names have been mentioned.

During last summer a traveler was found murdered near one of those prairies, but he had been dead so long it was impossible to ascertain who he was.

Monday, Nov. 8.—Left Dermott's at 7 o'clock. Crossed a prairie five miles wide. Met with a new species of game called prairie hens. They are very much like the pheasant, and I am of the opinion they are the grouse. Plenty of deer and turkeys. Crossed a prairie twelve miles broad and arrived at the house of Rutherford, the second man on the cutthroat list. We had time

enough to pass this house, but having a list of desperadoes, and being disappointed in seeing Gatewood, curiosity induced us to spend the night. This was a piece of comedy for information which was near ending in tradegy. Our traveling party consisted of four persons, Dr. Hill, myself and two young men, strangers, from Kentucky. As we traveled in a little carriage, and with a pair of horses, we placed our fellow-travelers' baggage with our own, which made a considerable show. On our arrival a man dressed like a Quaker pretended to be hostler until he ascertained the quantity of our baggage. I recognized him as an engraver from Philadelphia, who had been a candidate for the penitentiary for forgery. We called for the landlord, and were informed by Mrs. Rutherford that he was from home, but we could be well entertained and made comfortable in every way. Mrs. R. is a young and beautiful woman, possessing a delicacy of features and an elegance of shape, but seldom to be met with in those cabins of misery. The lily and the rose appeared to vie with each other to gain the ascendency on her cheeks. Her teeth were even, beautifully white and well placed. Her hair curled in irregular ringlets down her neck. She smiled on all. Her eyes were quick, black, sparkling and full of impudence and bold and disagreeable looks.

"O woman, if by simple wile
Thy soul has strayed from honor's track,
'Tis mercy only can beguile,
By gentle ways, the wanderer back.
Go, go, be innocent and live!
The tongues of men may wound thee sore,
But heaven in pity can forgive,
And bids thee go and sin no more.

We spent our time very agreeably for about two hours. My friend was so much fascinated with this western beauty that I began to conclude his common stock of gallantry had much improved since his arrival in this fertile country. Indeed, they appeared mutually pleased and the fleeting hours seemed almost too short for the full enjoyment of each other's conversation. Myself and fellow-travelers enjoyed their mirth and jokes. Little did my friend dream a frightful cloud was hovering over him which threatened to darken all his bright prospects. We were suddenly startled by the shrill Indian warwhoop, which proceeded from a thicket near the house. It may not be amiss to mention here this warwhoop was what my friend had never heard before. It appeared to pass over his frame like an electrical shock, and from his being an elegant man, six feet high, and in a lover's attitude, he was reduced to about three feet in height, with knees

as high as his chin and the points of his shoulders higher than his head. In this situation he prespired very freely. We were not kept long in a state of suspense. Rutherford and three sturdy fellows, armed, entered the house, all half-drunk. They took no notice of us, but eyed our baggage, which was heaped on the floor. They drank freely of whisky, and appeared in fine spirits. As one of our companions was passing a small log house, in which food was kept, he heard men whispering, which he informed me of. I immediately got a candle. Searched the house, but did not see any person. However, as I was returning, I found two tall men hid in the chimney, who, on being spoken to, went into the house, making six all together, and most of them very tall. They were armed with rifles and butcher knives, without coats or hats, their sleeves rolled up, their beards long and their faces smutted, such as the bravos are represented in the play of "The Foundling of the Forest." We had been anxious to see some of these banditti, but we did not contemplate seeing so large a company or having so full a visit from the fraternity. Rutherford disguised himself and denied that he was landlord, or that he lived at the place. It was not long before we were informed of the business of those devil-like looking visitors. Some of their private consultations were overheard. Robbery

and murder was contemplated. They would frequently whisper and pinch each other, wink, eye us, then hunch each other and give a number of private signals which we did not understand. One observed "the trap door was too open," "that the boards were too wide apart," in a loud tone of voice. The reply was: "By G—, it should be screwed up tight enough before morning!" They often mentioned the names of the cut-throats we had on our list as their particular friends and associates. They also spoke of the two men who had been murdered the day before, and acknowledged that they ate their last meal in the house we were in. Laughed at the manner in which the throats of one of these unfortunate men was cut, and many other circumstances which would swell this memorandum too much. Convinced us beyond a doubt they were of the banditti that had been described to us. Our own safety now became a matter of serious consideration, and our party of four held a consultation after the robbers' consultation was over (which was held in the dark a little way from the house). The two strangers that we overtook on the road were firm-spirited, and declared we would die side by side or conquer if attacked. I am almost ashamed to add that a man whom I have named as friend in my memorandum, whom I have known for years, and with whom I had traveled 1,000 miles, ex-

pressed himself to the following effect: "By G—, instead of joining us he would take care of himself!" and insinuated that he would join the strongest side, and immediately went into the house and placed himself among the ruffians.

IV.—Escape From the Robber Band

Monday, Nov. 8, 1819.—The disappointment experienced from the unmanly conduct of Dr. Hill had a happy effect on our little company. It bound us more firmly and nearer together, and, I may add with truth, almost fitted us for the field of battle. The hour of 9 o'clock had now arrived, the night uncommonly dark and cloudy. On our going into the house one of the strangers went into the yard and gave the Indian war-whoop three times very loud. About 10 o'clock they took their six rifles, went into the yard with a candle and shot them off one by one, snuffing the candle at forty yards every shot. They then loaded afresh, primed and picked their flints. A large horn was then taken from the loft and blown distinctly three times very loud. All those signals (which we had been told of) brought no more of the company. They then dispatched two of their own party, who were gone until 12 o'clock. They stated to their comrades "they

could not be had." It may be readily imagined, after what we had overhead, seeing such preparations and observing many of their private signals, being warned of our danger previous to stopping at the house, together with the recent and cruel murders which had been committed, in a strange country, where every man made and executed his own law to suit himself—I say it cannot be a matter of wonder that our situation began to put on a character of the most unpleasant kind. However, we were well armed, having pistols, dirks, knives and a gun, and were determined, if necessity should require, to be murdered in the house, and not to be dragged into the woods, there to have our throats cut. It being a little after 12 o'clock the bravos proposed to take a drink and lie down on the floor to rest, which they did, and upon their arms. The house being very small they almost covered the floor of one room. The small back room was intended for us. There was no door to the partition, and the logs were about six inches apart. We were under some apprehension that in case of an attack they would be able to fire on us through the logs. After they were all still, myself and companions lay down in reach of each other, our clothes on, our dirks unsheathed, the guards off our pistols and three extra bullets in our gun, and agreed if a signal was given to fight the good fight. I had like to

have forgotten Dr. Hill. He had placed himself on the far side of the bed upon which I lay and had got out of the wall a small log, but not of sufficient size in case of accident to allow him to make his escape. Although the evening was cool the drops of sweat stood upon his forehead as large as peas. He complained of great pain about the kidneys and that his head hung loose upon his shoulders. Knowing those fellows were expert at cutting throats, from their conversation on that subject, I determined to put them to as much trouble as possible. Took off my cravat and twisted my silk handkerchief and tied it round my neck. In this situation we spent the night. We lay on our arms ready for the word. But little sleep. When they would move we did the same. If they coughed we followed the example. In this dreadful way the night was spent. I have no hesitation of declaring that if we had not been well armed or kept a strict watch we should have been robbed and murdered, and nothing but the fear of our killing a part of them kept their hands off. Could they have added to their numbers by their signals, our fate would have been certain. It is probable the balance of their party was engaged in some other enterprise. About the break of day the signal of rising was given by our visitors. We were on our feet in a minute, and our hands upon our arms. Three of them

examined their rifles, and, after having some conversation with their comrades, proceeded up the road we had to travel. I presumed to place themselves behind trees and fire upon us without the risk of being killed. We lost no time in placing our baggage in our carriage and getting ready to leave this robbers' den. After paying our bill and being ready for a start, one of the brotherhood begged I would take my saddlebags into the house again; that he wanted a dose of medicine for one who was very sick. This I declined doing, suspecting his object, and advised him to call on some person with whom he was better acquainted. We then bid adieu to Mr. Rutherford, his family, the banditti and the edge of the twelve-mile prairie. We had not traveled more than half a mile when we fell in with four travelers going to St. Louis, which increased our number to eight persons, and placed us out of danger. In making a memorandum of this unpleasant transaction, many important circumstances and some facts have been omitted. To have given a full detail would have taken more time than is in my power to devote at this time.

Tuesday, Nov. 9.—Traveled forty-two miles from Rutherford's to McCart's, a tolerably respectable house, which is a rare thing in this part of the country. Large prairies, one twenty-two

miles wide. Rich land, but of little value, the proportion of timber being too small, water being scare and its situation remote. Crossed the Okaw or Kaskaskia river and two branches of Silver creek on the 10th and 11th days of the month; distance, fifty-four miles. Arrived at the town of Illinois, on the Mississippi, a little village opposite St. Louis. We crossed part of the American bottom, which has the appearance of once having been the bed of some lake or river. It abounds in marine substances. It is bounded by high and rocky cliffs from 100 to 300 feet in height. The marks washed in these cliffs centuries ago at high and low water mark are plain to be seen. The American bottom is about 120 miles long and from two to seven miles in breadth; contains some creeks and lakes; is perfectly level, without a stump or root. Soil, ten feet deep, black as ink, very light, and I think I may add without the fear of contradiction that it is the richest land in the world. The town of Illinois is on part of the American bottom, which is low, flat and unhealthy. Bilious fevers in all their various shapes are to found in almost every family for forty miles around. More pale and deathly-looking faces seen in the last two days than I have even seen in Philadelphia in two months. Crossed over the bold river Illinois to St. Louis and bid adieu for the present to Illinois.

So far much disappointed in the inhabitants, but not in the land. Illinois is the hiding place for villains from every part of the United States, and, indeed, from every quarter of the globe. A majority of the settlers have been discharged from penitentiaries and gaols or have been the victims of misfortune or imprudence. Many of those will reform, but many, very many, are made fit for robbery and murder. High as our country stands above others for its perfection, yet it has curses which at times threaten to sink it on a level with the most disgraced. Slavery and penitentiaries have done more mischief than war or disease. I hope to see the day when there will be universal emancipation, when the penitentiaries of the United States will be changed from schools of vice to schools of virtue. Then will the United States be the admiration of all the nations of the world, and he that is born within their bounds will be proud of the land that gave him birth.

Friday, Nov. 12.—Remained this day in St. Louis. The town is not very handsome or large. The streets are narrow and irregular, and the houses, with a few exceptions, meanly built. It appears the attention of the inhabitants has been turned solely toward making money. Taste and art as yet have been much neglected. Visited the Roman chapel. Although unfinished it is a spa-

cious, handsome building. The new bank is of modern shape, in appearance, a very neat little building. Visited the Indian museum or grand council or war chamber, which contains many specimens of curious workmanship, and a number of curiosities presented to the government by the chiefs of different nations. Visited the theater. This is only a temporary building. It is placed in the middle of a duck puddle, is finished in the coarsest manner and of the meanest materials. The decorations inside are few. The gallery will contain about ten persons and the house 200. No danger of fire. The water rises in the pit and in case of emergency a tolerably brisk fellow might run head foremost through any part of it. In ridiculously ugly and slight appearance it surpasses all ever seen or heard of. It is not half so large or half so good as the common horse-stables in Philadelphia.

Saturday, Nov. 13.—Left St. Louis at 6 o'clock a. m. Crossed the Mississippi to Illinois on my way to Kaskaskia. Passed a small village called Cahokia, a miserable, dirty little hole. But very few good houses. Inhabitants half French, half Indian, retaining part of the manners of both. The French language is generally spoken, but not in its purity. For eight or ten miles we traveled on the American bottom, which, in all probabili-

ties, never was surpassed in fertility. After leaving the bottom the country is rather hilly and barren. Traveled twenty-two miles and lodged at Waterloo, a town without houses. Only two families in the place. Every land speculator produces one or more of these dirt-cabin villages. Indeed, two-thirds of the travelers met with are land speculators. The inhabitants of this part of the country appear to be a wretched set of beings. Their great-coats are made out of a blanket, with a cap or hood out of the same piece. Then moccasins and leggins complete the suit. Uncover a Frenchman's head and his friends are immediately alarmed for his health. The pig pens in Pennsylvania are generally as clean and much better built than the miserable huts occupied by these lazy people. In a state of almost starvation they hold their Gumbo balls twice a week. For nimbleness of foot and lightness of heart the French have never been surpassed.

"Hope springs eternal in the human breast;
Man never is, always to be, blest."

Excellent wages in this country for hired people, either black or white, men or women. It is very common for a log cabin tavern without a door or window (perhaps a log out to answer both purposes) to sup and lodge twenty persons, men

women and children. A living is so easily obtained in this rich country that the most industrious of the inhabitants soon grow indolent. Perhaps the ague and fever unfits them for exertion or labor, but those things or something not accounted for produces laziness.

Sunday, Nov. 14.—Left Waterloo and traveled twenty miles to breakfast at Mrs. LaCount's in the little ancient French village called Prairie De Rouche or Rocky Meadows. In traveling this distance I saw only three houses. Just before I arrived at the village Prairie De Rouche we descended a hill half a mile in height and entered again on the American bottom. The lands are hilly, barren and full of limestone. Game of all descriptions in great abundance. Mme. LaCount entertained us politely. She is considered the queen of this little village, which is the sum and substance of everything that is poor and miserable. Mme. LaCount's daughter being ill, I was deprived of a great deal of valuable information. She speaks good English, and is a very sensible, intelligent young lady for such a village. The houses here have the most antique and mean appearance, built of the barks of trees and puncheons, slabs, etc., often without doors. Their windows are without sashes, but small pieces of broken glasses of all shapes pasted ingeniously

together with paper serve to admit the light upon a motley family, between white, red and black. Many of those wretched hovels are ready to tumble down on the heads of starving Indians, French and negroes, all mixed together. Negro-French is the common language of this town. Indeed, unless you can speak some French it is with much difficulty you can find any person who can understand you. Left Mme. LaCount's, traveled twelve miles over an extremely fertile country and arrived at Kaskaskia a little before sunset.

Monday, Nov. 15.—Remained in this inconsiderable village this day. Much disappointed in the appearance of the long-talked-of Kaskaskia. It is situated on the Okaw or Kaskaskia river, three miles from the Mississippi. It never can be a place of much business. The land office is kept at this place. There are some neat buildings, but they are generally old, ugly and inconvenient. Their streets are irregular and of bad widths. The inhabitants are all generals, colonels, majors, land speculators or adventurers, with now and then a robber and a cutthroat. I have to keep my long knife sharp and my eyes open. Went to church at night. A fellow tried to pick my pocket. Had my hand upon my long knife.

Tuesday, Nov. 16.—Dr. Hill having business at the lead mine, I consented to wait until his return. Wanting amusement, I engaged in hunting. Among other game I wounded a parrot, an uncommonly handsome bird, with rich plumage. It appeared to possess all the sagacity of the tame parrot. When it was first wounded it made every effort to defend itself, but after remaining a captive for a short time it appeared pleased with every kind attention, as do the domesticated parrots of the West Indies. In hunting, passed over a field that contains 5,000 acres of land, principally under cultivation. This field is part of the American bottom and is the common property of all the French of Kaskaskia. This land produces from sixty to 120 bushels of corn to the acre. More fertile land I never beheld. The inhabitants are subject to intermittent fevers. At this time there are thousands of acres of this excellent land for sale at from $4 to $8 an acre, and a good proportion woodland. Dr. Hill not having returned on the 17th, I took a ride, the day being pleasant in consequence of a refreshing shower. Visited the governor's house, a miserable-looking old building, such as is found in the suburbs of towns. Crossed the great Okaw or Kaskaskia river. The water not knee-deep and about 100 yards wide. Visited the lieutenant-governor's house, which is situated across this

stream, opposite and in sight of Kaskaskia. This is the best-looking house in the place. It is painted white, but stands alone, without garden, yard or ornament of any kind. A worm fence is run around the house to keep the pigs out of the first story. Col. Menard, the lieutenant-governor, is a coarse-looking Frenchman, with all the habits, manners and dress of the common . . . of Philadelphia. Visited the Indian king of the Kaskia Indians and his people, who reside about three miles from the village. This nation is now reduced to about thirty in number. Many years ago all the different tribes of Indians combined, fell upon the Kaskians when they were unprepared for battle, and cut to pieces all their warriors, except about fifteen, and most of their women and children. The king of this little nation is a fine, majestic-looking man, six feet high. He spoke French. Was polite and more gentlemanly in his deportment than some of those great men of the place. He was very much indisposed. I had the honor of prescribing for him. The names, manners and customs of these people are such as are common among Indians, with this exception, that they are rather more comfortable as to living, etc. I was very much struck with the appearance of one of the young men. He is tall, straight, elegant and unassuming in his manners, has fine, regular features, and possesses

as mild and intelligent a countenance as is to be found in more civilized life. His eyes are dark, expressive and beaming with goodness, instead of ferocity.

Thursday, Nov. 18.—Dr. Hill not having returned, time passed heavily on. Hunted occasionally and visited the king again. I found his state of health much improved. He was very polite. Conversed sensibly and invited me to hunt with him. I took the rounds amongst his people. Found them generally in bark huts, sitting flat on the floor, making moccasins, etc. As none but the chief could speak English, I was deprived of the pleasure of conversation. In one of these bark huts without a door (and placed at a considerable distance from the other lodges) sat a female who was recently confined. This female had retired to this cold and open hut during her indisposition. She was alone from choice, and held down her head at my approach and showed signs of disapprobation. How commendable the modesty, even in a savage! She was placed in the middle of the floor near a handful of coals, seated on a buffalo robe and thinly dressed. The day was cold and she was without any appearance of what we call comfort. A small mug of herb tea was her drink, and there was no food to be seen. This female had twin children, which is a re-

markable occurrence amongst savages. These little strangers were bandaged tight from head to foot and lashed upon a board with one end sharpened for the convenience of the mother. Whenever she grows weary one end of the board is stuck into the ground and the children often are left for a considerable time. The appearance is singular, and would astonish those that had never seen the Indians' manner of treating their children. Indian children are white when born, their eyes very black. Their hair long, straight and black. Their features full and well-shaped with large, Roman noses. They look healthy and appear to live on one-half the nourishment which would be necessary for other children. During this visit I had an opportunity of seeing the king's daughter. She has adopted the civil dress and is polite and affable for a savage. She speaks but little English but speaks French fluently. Her father and self profess the Roman Catholic religion. This Indian is more comely than the rest of the females, but I have never been able to trace any lines of beauty about those children of the forest. This Indian king owns 2,000 acres of the American bottom. Part he rents out to advantage, and part he cultivates. He lives well and might live elegantly. I omitted to mention that Kaskaskia is the seat of government, which gave me an opportunity of seeing all the heads

of departments, governor, lieutenant-governor, secretary of state, sheriffs, magistrates, etc. They are well suited to a new country and an infant state.

Friday, Saturday and Sunday, Nov. 19-21.—Spent those days in Kaskia and its neighborhood in hunting, and rambling through this garden of a country, every day affording new amusement and presenting very interesting subjects for the mind to dwell upon. On this day, the 21st, Dr. Hill returned from the lead mine, a distance of forty-seven miles. He traveled over a poor and barren country and was not much pleased with his journey. He saw twenty deer in one herd, and was informed there were some buffalo, wild-cats, wolves, etc., in the neighborhood.

V.—In Possession of the "Promised Land"

Monday, Nov. 22, 1819.—This day breakfasted with Mr. R. Morrison and dined with Mr. W. Morrison. These gentlemen are wealthy and live in very comfortable style. Mrs. R. Morrison is one of the most intelligent women that I have conversed with, and possesses a lady's privilege, while Mrs. W. Morrison might rank, in point of beauty with some of the belles of Philadelphia.

Dr. Hill having accomplished his business, we set out from Kaskia at 2 o'clock, after bidding a friendly farewell to many new friends made in this place. I must confess I found a few possessing so much more merit than I anticipated that I parted with them reluctantly. Traveled twelve miles, and arrived at Mme. LeCount's. We supped with a tableful of French. Not one of them could speak English. Pumpkins, spoiled venison and rancid, oily butter for supper, added to the odor of a few 'coons and opossums that were ripening in the sun, induced us to cut our comfort short. During the night I was taken ill with rheumatism. Bled myself largely. Set out at 6 o'clock in the morning rather better, though dull. Passed some small lakes full of ducks and geese. Saw seven deer, some wild turkeys and other game. Retraced our former steps. Passed Cahokia, a small and unimproving village, and arrived at the town of Illinois at 7 o'clock p. m.

Wednesday, Nov. 24.—Crossed over to St. Louis to inquire for old friends or acquaintances from Philadelphia. Even an enemy would have been taken by the hand, but to my disappointment there was no arrival. Recrossed the Mississippi, and set out for Edwardsville. Passed some large lakes. Large and extremely fertile prairies, neat dwellings and good farms, well cultivated. Ar-

rived at Edwardsville, a distance of twenty-two miles, at 7 o'clock. Edwardsville is a small but flourishing little village. Goods three prices. Labor high. Lands rich and the place thriving for an inland town.

Friday, Nov. 26.—Rainy day. Deposited deeds at recorder's office. Detained on land business. I expected this day to have set out for the bounty lands. Dr. Hill having fully accomplished his business, he declined accompanying me agreeable to promise, and I returned to St. Louis alone, leaving him behind, intending to seek more grateful company.

Wednesday, Dec. 1.—In consequence of the disappointment occasioned by Dr. Hill refusing to accompany me to the bounty lands, I was subjected to considerable expense, loss of time and much inconvenience. On the 3d day of December Dr. Hill set out for Philadelphia, in company with one of my friends, a Mr. Pratt, a clever old farmer and a missionary Methodist preacher. I accompanied them across the river. In parting with Dr. Hill I must in honesty confess I felt none of those unpleasant sensations produced at parting with a friend. A pleasant ride and a final adieu to him. After dividing my time between St. Louis and Illinois until the 8th day of December,

I set out, in company with a Mr. B——, to visit the bounty lands. Traveled to Milton, a small town over the American bottom, twenty miles. This soil cannot be surpassed in fertility by any land upon the globe. Eighty and 100 bushels of corn to the acre are common crops without any labor except that which is necessary in planting. This, in truth, is the promised land—the land that flows with milk and honey. Stock in any quantities may be raised free from expense, and every article made by the farmer commands as high a price as in Philadelphia, and a more ready market. How many thousands are there in the eastern states who work like the slaves of the south and are barely able to support their families without even the hope in old age to become comfortable. Could they believe there was such a country in the world, could they know that lands of the first quality can be obtained so easily, and be informed that the rewards of industry are so great, they would instantly fly to the west and meet fatigue and hardships on the way with a smile. In a few years the consequence would be the accumulation of wealth and fair prospects for a rising family. Milton is situated on Wood river (a very small stream opposite the mouth of the Missouri river and within one and a half miles of the Mississippi). It is a flourishing little village only one and a half years old. Near this

place lands command from $5 to $10 an acre. Milton, together with all the American bottom, is subject to bilious and intermittent fevers during the warm months. The banks of Wood river during the last war were often scoured by the Indians, and became the theater of some savage and barbarous deeds. A narrative hangs yet on the lips of the inhabitants, which has seldom found its parallel in the most remote desert by the most ferocious or bloodthirsty. Seven warriors attacked and murdered a female and her four little children almost in sight of her own dwelling. She and the little innocents had spent an evening at a friend's house, and were returning home. The shrieks of this unfortunate family brought the husband to the scalped and lifeless corpse of a beloved wife, and a tender and affectionate father to his four little children bleeding in death, the suckling child with a tomahawk sticking in its head. None but a husband and father can feel the deep agony which must arise from so bloody a transaction. Those warriors, whose companion was cruelty and whose happiness was in murder, were pursued by some resolute and spirited volunteers from the neighborhood. They were overtaken and every man put to death. Not long after this butchery another party fell upon a defenseless family in the same neighborhood. They shot an old man in his door,

scalped a young female in the house and threw her in the fire, tomahawked and scalped two little children, whilst two boys made their escape—one 6 and the other 8 years old. These little children wandered about the fields and woods for three days without nourishment except the berries and roots which they were able to collect from the fields. Three times did they get in sight of the murderers, and as often hid themselves in the leaves, and finally found their way to a house and communicated the dreadful intelligence of the massacre. The hand that governs and protects all was outstretched to save these children in a manner unusual. I am now in sight of the death spot of those unfortunates, and expect to travel 100 miles farther, where but a short time since no track or trace was to be seen except that of the savage.

Thursday, Dec. 9.—Left Milton at 6 o'clock. Passed Alton, distance from Milton one and one-half miles. Here I must remark every man makes his own town and sometimes more than one. Within five miles there are five towns, as they are called, but all insignificant and improperly placed. Their names are Milton, Alton, Middle Alton, Lower Alton and Sales. Those mushroom towns in a short time will produce their own death. Although their lives are short they do

mischief to the community. People in their neighborhood are unwise enough, for the sake of having a town lot, to give as much for a few feet of ground as would purchase a good farm (160 acres of land). They are then tied to the little town, where their property can never be of much value, nor can it produce a living. Strangers or men at a distance purchase lots in towns they have never seen, under the impression they are, or soon will be, like the eastern cities. To townmakers or land speculators the subject is very pleasant. To hear them describe the advantages of a barren spot perhaps ten miles from any navigable stream, and it is more than probable not even near a spring branch that would float a cornstalk boat. Could you believe their assertions, a single lot which they have for sale would produce a fortune that would make a man comfortable all his old days. I must not omit an anecdote that applies well to those townmakers. A gentleman visited the fertile lands of Illinois. In the course of his journey he passed very many of those trifling towns. When about to turn toward his home he had occasion to enter a tavern for refreshment. Here they kept a register of names, a common practice in the western country. On entering the door the barkeeper requested him to enter his name. He hesitated, appeared confused and begged to be excused, stating he had

a particular objection which he would make known when he was about to start, provided it could be kept a secret, which was consented to. This was sufficient to arouse the suspicions of all who were in the house as to the stranger's honesty. All the neighbors assembled. Some declared he was a horse thief, others a murderer, while the most charitable stated he had been a member of the penitentiary fraternity. After obtaining refreshments with some difficulty he mounted his horse amidst the gaping crowd, called for the barkeeper and whispered in his ear, loud enough for everybody to hear: "My name is Robinson. I objected to mentioning it, fearing you would name a town after me!" He spurred his horse, rode off and left the gaping crowd, which is always to be found about little villages, much disappointed and chagrined. Traveled twenty-seven miles over a rich country, part rolling, part broken, belonging to the United States. This part of Illinois is high and healthy and is well watered. Arrived at the Widow Jackaway's ferry, one mile above the junction of the Mississippi and Illinois rivers. Passed several small French huts, made principally of bark, very open and but little appearance of comfort. Large strings of geese, ducks, opossums and skunks hung upon the sides of the huts to ripen. At Mrs. Jackaway's we were entertained kindly. We slept on a bedcord and

covered with a cow-hide. There was but one room to the house, hen house excepted, which formed rather a separate apartment, but without a door, and the fowls had to pass through the house to get to their lodgings. This appeared necessary to protect them from the wolves and wildcats.

Friday, Dec. 10.—Left Mrs. Jackaway's at 8 o'clock. Crossed the Illinois on a platform placed on two canoes, and arrived in safety on the bounty lands a little above the junction of the bold Mississippi and the Illinois. Each of those rivers is about half a mile wide. Here a new country presented itself, of better quality and under more advantages than I was prepared to meet. Traveled all day through the woods, meadows and prairies. It began raining. We were fortunate in being able to reach Mme. Belfie's, on the banks of the Illinois. On inquiring if we could remain all night, being wet and uncomfortable, we were received with all the politeness that characterizes the French under all circumstances, and given in broken English a hearty welcome. Supper being prepared for the family, we were invited to partake. Curiosity, which has led us into many scrapes, was on tiptoe. Wild goose was very good. After fishing in the dish some time I found something with a new flavor. It proved

to be skunk. Made a light supper and retired to bed. Mme. Belfie lives in a log hut about twelve feet square. This contains a bed for the old lady and her daughter, two dogs, one hen and chickens, two chairs, and one table. It is easy to imagine there was not much room left for two common-sized men. However, we spread down our buffalo-skin and covered with our great-coats, and for the first time I slept on a floor. Sore sides, but good spirits and no cold. Began to envy the red-men of the forest. They have no care, no trouble, to wrinkle the brow.

Sunday, Dec. 12.—Left Mme. Belfie's after being treated with the utmost hospitality and politeness. She discovered herself to be a wellbred woman, but she was not one of fortune's favorites. During the evening she amused us by giving a small history of her life. However, her story ended with a detail of misfortunes. About seven years ago a dreadful earthquake occurred at New Madrid, on the Mississippi where was the habitation of this lady and her husband. Their home was swallowed up, their slaves ran away, all their property was lost, and with great difficulty got off with their lives. The earth opened and swallowed up many houses, then threw up water and trees to a great height. Several lives were lost and many families ruined. These unfortunate

French people then sought shelter from the storm near the forks of the Mississippi and Illinois rivers, intending, by industry and frugality, to make an effort to get forward once more in the world. The manner in which this old lady gave an account of her misfortunes was truly interesting whilst she made a strong impression on the mind by her gestures. The only article saved from the earthquake was a bag of gunpowder, with which, in this country, where there is an abundance of game, plenty of provisions may be obtained. It was necessary that the bag containing this powder should be tied. The wife held whilst the husband tied the string, but drawing it very tight one end slipped through his fingers and the jerk threw the bag of powder into the fire, which blew them both up and burnt all their clothes off them. They were ill a considerable time, but recovered. They had nothing left, but, like the French, they were cheerful, not discouraged, and almost happy. They are now getting forward again, and, oh, may the storm of adversity never again assail the cottage of genuine hospitality!

Monday, Dec. 13.—Left Mme. Belfie's, crossed the Illinois and breakfasted at the Widow Jackaway's. Here we met with some travelers, ladies and gentlemen, who had been upwards of three

months on the water in an open boat. They were forty-nine days on Lake Michigan and were bound from Mackinaw to St. Louis. We retraced our former footsteps for four miles and traveled on the shore of the Mississippi twelve miles. On the shore of the Mississippi for miles stand cliffs or bluffs composed of rocks, stones and marine substances. They are from 100 to 400 feet high. In many places there appear to be pillars or regular columns supporting those wonderful heights, which in many places appear almost ready to tumble on those below. In the body of this irregular mass I entered three caves, two large enough to protect a considerable family from the storm and the third sufficiently large to contain twenty men on horseback. This cave is supported by a neat pillar in the center. In several places I saw marks on the cliffs at a considerable height made with the different colors that Indians use to paint themselves. From their arrangement, it appears the men of the desert had tried their agility to place the highest mark on the cliffs. Near those caves are the names of a number of persons cut in the soft parts of the rocks. In traveling along the shore I picked up several specimens of the most beautiful pearl I ever beheld. It is so plentiful here that no person thinks it worth picking up. After traveling forty-three miles through the rain I arrived again

at St. Louis on the 13th of December. In approaching the Illinois and Mississippi near the mouth from Milton a scene beautiful, grand and sublime presents itself. Immediately after leaving a thick wood you find yourself on the point of a knob or small mountain many hundred feet high. From this eminence you have a view of three bold and beautiful streams—the Mississippi, Illinois and Missouri. The country on one side is bordered with very high bluffs as far as the eye can reach, and on the other is a meadow or plain prairie, which extends for many miles in every direction, and occasionally is interspersed with handsome forest trees. The shells and marine substances which are found near those large rivers are similar to those seen in the West Indies and on the seaboard, but I have no recollection of ever having seen such near any stream remote from the sea. This, with many other appearances, holds out a strong inducement to believe that the sea once covered this country for many hundred miles; that the cliffs were its borders, and that some violent convulsion of nature has caused it to recede and expose to view the most fertile country on the globe. Should accident place this memorandum in the hands of any person, an apology will be necessary for expressions and opinions which is contains. In speaking of particular states and people I have ex-

pressed myself as a traveler, but have stated facts. The country traveled over by strangers is generally the most barren, and the inhabitants a coarse sample of the state. When I have expressed an opinion which appears not to be liberal, it is intended to apply to the lower class, of whom there is a large majority. A gentleman or lady is the same all over the world, and although in the different states there are many characters of the first respectability, and although some of the French are rich, liberal and gentlemanly men, yet this memorandum is strictly correct when applied to the general mass.

RICHARD LEE MASON.

14 DAY USE
RETURN TO DESK FROM WHICH BORROWED

LOAN DEPT.

This book is due on the last date stamped below, or
on the date to which renewed.
Renewed books are subject to immediate recall.

8 Nov 63 JC
REC'D LD
DEC 18 '63 -5 PM
FEB 2 1968 70
REC'D LD
JAN 19 '68 -9 PM
JAN 5 1976 34
REC. CIR. DEC 15 '75

LD 21A–40*m*-4,'63
(D6471s10)476B

General Library
University of California
Berkeley

Mason, Richard L.
Narrative of Richard Lee Mason in the pioneer West, 1819

Case B

U. C. BERKELEY LIBRARIES
C081026959

M160313 F 165 M3

CASE B

THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY